



MICHIGAN CHAPTER

December 3, 2012

House Natural Resources, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Committee
Anderson House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: SB 1350

Dear Committee members:

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter encourages you to vote NO on Senate Bill 1350, which would authorize a recreational hunting season on Michigan's gray wolf population. The gray wolf was just recently removed from the Endangered Species list by the federal government in January of 2012 after having been on the list since 1973. It took the gray wolf population almost 40 years to recover, and we believe that it is short-sighted to create a recreational hunting season on the animal so quickly after it has been delisted, especially when there is a lack of scientific information to show that the bill would not harm the gray wolf population.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources' is required to perform a five year scientific study on the gray wolf population under the Michigan Wolf Recovery Plan, but has not begun the study. The MDNR submitted this plan in its contention that the wolf should be removed from the federal Threatened and Endangered Species list, but has taken no steps to complete its commitment to the five year study. The Legislature should fund the required study and wait for its results before discussing any change in current management of Michigan's gray wolf population. Creating a recreational hunting season for gray wolves would be a premature decision.

For those concerned with depredation problems (when wolves menace livestock production), there are many non-hunting solutions. For example, Public Acts 290 and 318 from 2008 allow an individual to kill a wolf if it attacks their livestock or pet. There is also a compensation program to reimburse livestock producers for verified losses caused by wolves through the federal government. These measures have proven to be effective in reducing wolf depredation, making SB 1350 unnecessary.

For these reasons, we urge a NO vote on SB 1350. Votes taken on this bill will be included in the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter's Legislative Scorecard.

Sincerely,

Mike Berkowitz
Legislative & Political Director
Sierra Club Michigan Chapter